



## 2004 Annual Report





# Message from the Regional Director



**Marcia Blaszak**  
Regional Director

**A**s I write in mid-winter, the daylight hours are beginning to lengthen, incrementally adding to the anticipation of spring, summer and another eventful year in our lives and in our parks. The year just past has been one of significant accomplishment for national parks in Alaska. I think you will agree after examining this annual report.

This report not only gives us an opportunity to share those accomplishments, but to look farther back in Alaska's history and see how our communities and their park neighbors have evolved. A day next winter, December 2, will mark the 25th anniversary of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act. The average Alaskan was a child when Congress concluded its debate and President Jimmy Carter signed the law. With his signature, the size of America's National Park System doubled. More than 32 million acres of national park, preserve and monument land in Alaska was protected as designated wilderness. Subsistence privileges became the law of the land.

Access provisions were secured for industry and residents.

And the hard work of implementing the law was just beginning. Twenty-five years have settled many questions that burned in the days leading up to the Lands Act. Some answers came in court cases. Others came from policy decisions. And many more came simply as time passed, employees became rooted in park gateway communities, Alaskans embraced the neighboring parks and our state's economy and society evolved.

Changes have come every year to our parks. This spring, we will celebrate the opening of a new visitor center in the frontcountry of Denali, truly our flagship facility. Kenai Fjords National

Park visitors will enjoy the first full year of operation of a new nature center. Parks will host more than 2.2 million visitors — more than triple the number who came in the early 1980s.

Alaska businesses serving park visitors now number more than 400, a significant part of the economy, as are the wages and benefits of more than 400 permanent park employees in 18 communities.

So, too, do we look forward this year to knowing that the inherent natural and cultural resources of Alaska's national parks — what a predecessor in the 1980s called Alaska's true Permanent Fund — are essentially sound. While clearly affected by global forces, and naturally dynamic in ways we are only beginning to understand, park resources remain, as our mission requires, "unimpaired for future generations."

Finally this year, we look forward to continuing the expansion of our relationships with park neighbors. A few examples are highlighted in the following pages, but throughout the region you will find a growing willingness to join with others to accomplish goals of mutual benefit. I invite you to learn more about your parks and to make time this year to visit your national parks.

## Cover

The Tony Edwardson whaling crew, of Barrow, AK, paddles their umiaq through ice-choked waters during spring whaling. This photograph is featured in the new permanent exhibit, "People of Whaling," now on display at the Iñupiat Heritage Center in Barrow, an NPS Affiliated Area. Photograph by Luciana Whitaker, courtesy Iñupiat Heritage Center.

Dall sheep & Melting Snow - Denali National Park.

All other photos NPS unless noted.

Several management changes were made in Alaska's national park units in 2004. Key positions with new managers include the following:

**Tom Heinlein** was named superintendent of Bering Land Bridge National Preserve. His new job came as part of a three-way change. Heinlein replaces **Brad Bennett**, who moved to Anchorage to take over management of the Alaska Public Lands Information Center and be the NPS Alaska Region's chief of interpretation. Bennett filled the lands center job held by **Clay Alderson**, who retired after a 35-year NPS career. Since Heinlein arrived in the spring of 2001, he has served as Biological Inventories Coordinator with the Arctic Inventory and Monitoring Network and in 2003, moved to Kotzebue to become the Western Arctic Parklands Chief of Resource Management and later duties of acting assistant superintendent.

**Jim Corless**, a career NPS employee and manager, was named superintendent of Klondike Gold Rush National



**Jim Corless**

Historical Park in Skagway and began his duties in October. Corless has 23 years of experience with the NPS. He has a broad background in history, cultural resource management and interpretation, and he's an experienced planner having been involved in the post-flood Yosemite National Park work in the late 1990s. Corless served as the chief of interpretation and education at Lowell National Historical Park in Massachusetts prior to coming to Alaska.

A veteran National Park Service manager was named as superintendent of Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve, the largest unit in the national park system and a visitor destination of increasing popularity. **Jed Davis**, a 32-year-veteran with the NPS, began his career in 1971 as a seasonal at Grand Canyon National Park. He has held major facility management positions for the Service at Mount Rainier, Capital Reef, Glen Canyon, Bryce Canyon, Ozark National Scenic Riverways, Isle Royale and Death Valley National Parks. For the last four years Davis was deputy superintendent at Glacier Bay. With headquarters in Copper Center, Wrangell-St. Elias is a 13.2-million-acre park and preserve stretching from the Copper River to the Canadian border and from the Gulf of Alaska to nearly the Alaska Highway.

A former three-term mayor of Bettles, **Jeff Mow** was named as superintendent of Kenai Fjords National Park. He came to the job from Colorado, where he was superintendent at Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument in Colorado. Mow's career began in 1988



**Jeff Mow**

as a seasonal backcountry ranger in Glacier Bay. Over the course of 13 years in Alaska, he held a variety of positions, including subsistence manager for Gates of the Arctic and Yukon-Charley Rivers; chief of operations for Gates of the Arctic; Anaktuvuk Pass district ranger for Gates of the Arctic; law enforcement ranger at Klondike Gold Rush; and assistant regional law enforcement specialist in Anchorage.



Visitation to Alaska's national parks reached a record in 2004, with just under 2.3 million visits. That's nearly triple the number of visits that parks saw just 20 years earlier. The growth has been particularly large in the Southeast Alaska parks. Klondike Gold Rush has seen its visitation more than quadruple in 20 years and Sitka and Glacier Bay have tripled the number of visits. Kenai Fjords has seen an eight-fold increase in visitation, from 30,700 in 1984 to more than 250,000 last year.

Several other significant developments in visitor services took place in 2004. These include:

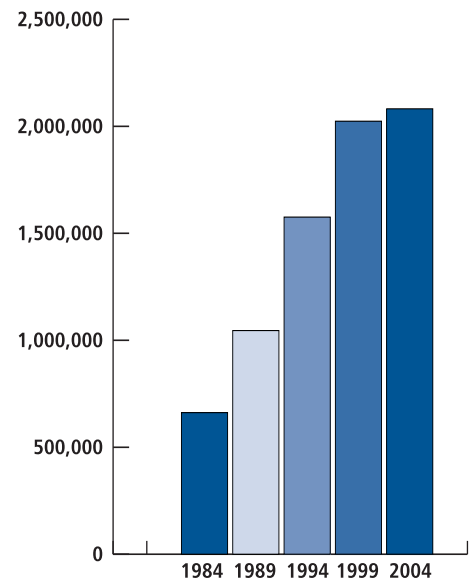
In June, the NPS celebrated the award of the Glacier Bay Lodge concession contract to a joint venture between Huna Totem and ARAMARK, a large, experienced park concessioner with operations in Denali and several Lower 48 national parks including

Ellis Island and Grand Canyon. Huna Totem is the Native village corporation for Hoonah. The traditional territory of its Native shareholders encompasses much of Glacier Bay National Park. The partnership broadens Huna Totem's move into the tourism industry; it has been providing interpretive services to Holland America cruise ships in Glacier Bay for the past four years, and has also developed a cruise ship destination at Icy Strait Point near Hoonah. The Glacier Bay concession contract will include operation of the 56-room Glacier Bay Lodge, the day tour boat at Bartlett Cove and additional services in the park.

July saw the official opening of the Arctic Interagency Visitor Center in Coldfoot. The National Park Service is a partner with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Bureau of Land Management in operating the center, which serves as the "front country" to Gates of the Arctic National Park and

other public lands in the region. Trip planning, evening programs, maps and a knowledgeable staff are among the services provided.

## Statewide NPS Recreational Visits



The new food court and retail sales area at Denali was completed in 2004. It will be run jointly by Alaska Natural History Association and Joint Ventures.



**Denali's Murie Science and Learning Center operates field camps for multi-day education programs.**

National parks have long represented an intersection of scientific research, education, land conservation, and visitor enjoyment. Nowhere was that multi-faceted mission more evident in 2004 than at Denali National Park with the opening and operation of the Murie Science and Learning Center.

The center is a collaboration between Denali, seven other Alaska national parks and several partners to promote research and provide science-based education programs and information to students, educational institutions and visitors.

As the primary park partner for fee-based programs, the Denali Institute and its parent organization, the Alaska Natural History Association, provides operating and programmatic support.

The Institute partners with the park on staffing the Murie Center, program development, and operation of the Field Camp for multi-day education programs. The Denali Foundation also offers fee-based programs at the center and provides researcher housing. Partner and park concessioner Doyon-Aramark Joint Venture operates the center's food facility jointly with its employee dining room. The Denali Borough School District provides technical support and equipment to the center and has donated a state-of-the-art video-conferencing unit.

The building was completed in August and provides a classroom, exhibit area and office space for staff and visiting researchers. Other services provided by the center and its partners include: providing space for educational programs and events; internet access and

data transmission capabilities; wireless network abilities along the first 35 miles of the park road; video-conferencing; curriculum-based education programs for grades K-12; school-to-work learning programs; college field courses, multi-day field-based seminars and teacher training; and daily public science research excursions.

Denali's visitor services will experience two major changes in 2005. In May, a new group of visitor facilities will open in the front country near the Alaska Railroad depot to provide visitor orientation, food service, and park interpretation. Also, the Eielson Visitor Center at Mile 66 of the park road will be closed. It is being torn down and rebuilt with a larger, up-to-date and less intrusive facility that is scheduled to open in 2008.



**A**laska's national parks have long been recognized as exceptional areas for scientific research. Early parks, such as Katmai and Glacier Bay, came in to the National Park System largely because of their dynamic landscapes.

Denali is one of the largest areas in the world where a complex predator-prey system functions without significant manipulation by humans, and is an equally valuable and long-standing laboratory. Predator-prey research in Denali began with Adolph Murie's pioneering work in the late 1930s and continues with radiotelemetry studies of wolf and caribou populations begun in the 1980s. Radio collars are used to keep track of a representative sample of cows from the Denali caribou herd to estimate survival, calf production and recruitment. Aerial surveys are conducted three times per year to track changes in the size and structure of the caribou herd.

About ten wolf packs in Denali are monitored with radio collars to delineate their territories and estimate wolf numbers. Increasingly, GPS/ARGOS satellite collars are used to obtain more detailed estimates of wolf movements, but observing animals from the air remains a valuable method of obtaining information on wildlife populations.

Studies of predators and prey in Denali have also included research and surveys of moose, grizzly bears, and Dall sheep in an attempt to understand some of the workings of this complex predator-prey system. Relations between predator and prey species in Denali change dramatically from place to place and from one year to the next, as weather conditions affect the movements and vulnerability of ungulates, and predators respond by changing their feeding habits. Some unexpected results have come out of predator-prey studies, as researchers discovered that

wolves in some parts of the park may depend heavily on salmon for nourishment, and wolves in those same areas may starve in summer if resources are inadequate.

Denali is helping to develop and implement long-term monitoring plans for wolves, moose, caribou, Dall sheep and grizzly bears to be used in other parks. These will be designed to track changes in the numbers and distribution of large mammals for many years to come.



About ten wolf packs in Denali are monitored with radio collars to delineate their territories and estimate wolf numbers.

**T**he latest research and investigations into the evolving natural and cultural worlds of Glacier Bay National Park, including such topics as thinning glacial ice, bear-human interactions, and changes in fisheries and marine habitat, were the focus on the Glacier Bay Science Symposium held in Juneau in October.

Sponsored by the National Park Service and the U.S. Geological Survey Alaska Science Center, the symposium featured brief presentations by researchers on work conducted in and near the national park. One of the nation's oldest national park areas, Glacier Bay has long been a key location for research, particularly studies related to its dynamic glaciers and changing marine environment.

In 2004, regulations were drafted to implement the decisions made through a lengthy environmental impact statement regarding the quotas and operating requirements for cruise ships and other categories of motorized watercraft in Glacier Bay. These regulations, which address the continuing demand for motorized vessel access in a manner that protects park resources and values, are based on continued research on topics such as underwater noise, air quality and the effects of vessels on marine mammals and seabirds. The regulations are expected to be implemented this year.

The importance of completing this planning and regulatory process was underscored in the summer of 2004 by the death of a humpback whale calf, an endangered species, from injuries caused by a collision with a vessel. This was the second known whale death in the bay caused by a vessel collision, the



**In the summer of 2004 a humpback whale in Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve was killed after a collision with a vessel. Each summer humpback whales return to the bay from their wintering grounds near Hawaii to feed on the abundant small schooling fish such as sand lance and juvenile pollack.**

first occurring in 2001. A primary objective of managing vessel traffic in Glacier Bay is to prevent harm to whales and other park wildlife.

In Yukon-Charley Rivers, researchers are conducting DNA and other analyses on blood and tissue samples from more than 100 wolves to learn more about their baseline genetic structure, inbreeding, and other characteristics. This, along with radio-telemetry will provide better information to monitor the population of wolves as mandated by the Alaska Lands Act of 1980.

A vascular plant inventory of Aniakchak was completed by Alaska Natural Heritage Program and NPS staff in July. The inventory focused on three geographic areas and yielded 383 specimens, representing 275



**A park employee conducts DNA testing at Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve.**

taxa or 185 new records for the park unit. This collection increases the number of known taxa from 308 to 493, and represents approximately 95% of vascular plant species expected to occur. A number of collections represent significant range extensions or new occurrences of taxa of conservation concern.



**G**lacier Bay sponsored with partners Huna Heritage Foundation and Hoonah City Schools a variety of Hoonah youth educational trips into the park in 2004, including a week-long kayak trip into the Dundas Bay backcountry with the Hoonah High School kayak club, a two-day excursion to Dundas Bay with elders and high school students to visit several important cultural sites, and a day trip to Margerie Glacier with youth, elders and community members. Outreach also included two berry picking trips and harvest of beach foods. In all, some 160 people from Hoonah participated in these educational and outreach trips.

Glacier Bay presented its first long-distance learning program in 2004 using the internet as the classroom. Working with Distance Integrators, Inc. this program linked students from all over the country to park experts in the marine mammal field.

This Efield trip consisted of four components: an interactive multi-media web experience (called a virtual visit); a trip journal worksheet to accompany the virtual visit; an opportunity for students to ask park experts questions and receive answers about marine mammals; and a live text-based web chat where students asked questions and received their answers in real time. This successful program reached 7,750 students in 49 states and Germany.

In May 2004, visitors to Exit Glacier in Kenai Fjords National Park not only enjoyed a new nature center but saw some of the newest available energy technology in operation. The NPS, in partnership with the Propane Education and Research Council, the Alaska Energy Authority, the Denali Commission and other partners installed a fuel cell electrical system in the center to provide power and heat to the visitor facilities.

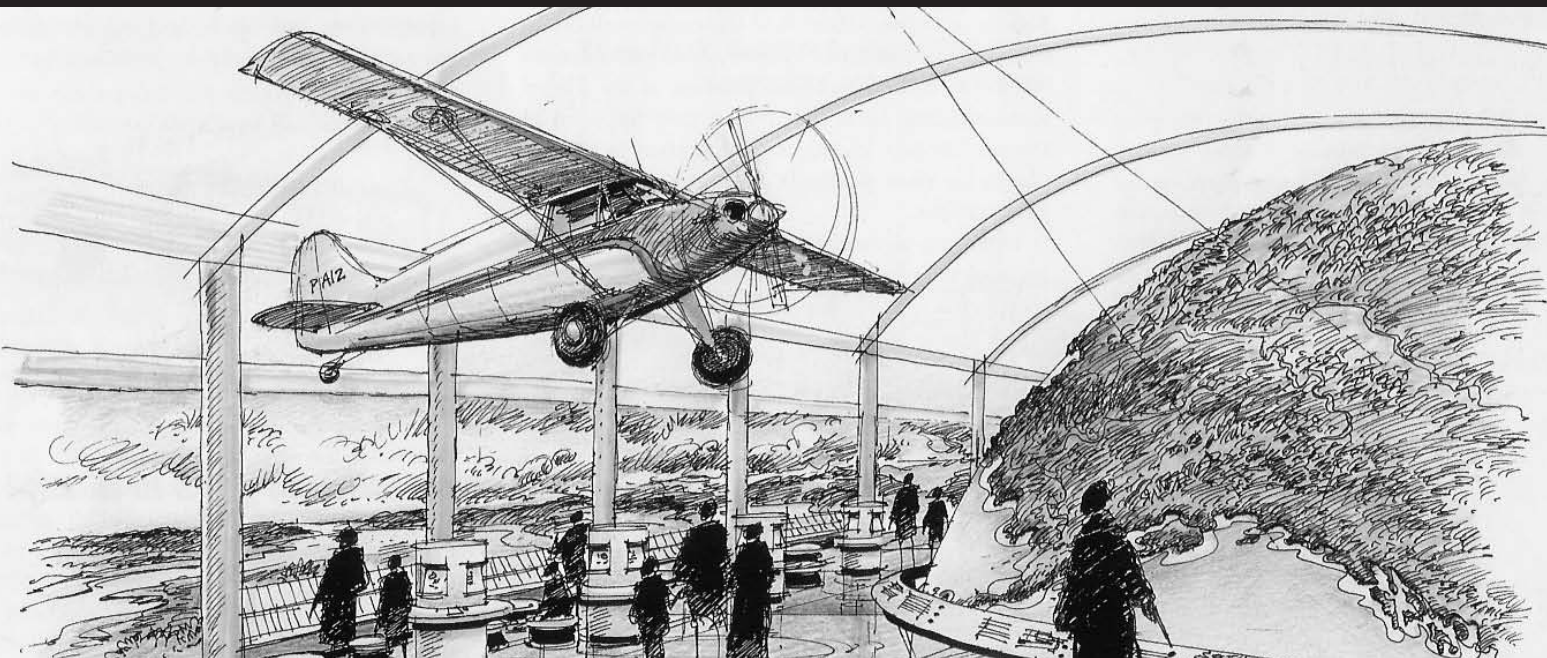
The 5-kilowatt solid oxide fuel cell uses propane as its hydrogen source, with the hydrogen in turn being used to generate electricity. The Exit Glacier project is the first time such a system has been used in Alaska in an area with no other commercial electrical source.

In late 2004, the National Park Service began making plans to host with several partners a Gateway Communities Workshop in April 2005 in Anchorage. Teams of community leaders from Anchorage, Seward, McCarthy, Chistochina, Kodiak, Trapper Creek and Healy — all areas with nearby large tracts of parks and refuges — will be exposed to how similar communities have worked to balance nature and commerce, resulting in economic growth while keeping community values intact.

**The Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program is a community resource of the National Park Service. Staff work with community groups and local and State governments to conserve rivers, preserve open space, and develop trails and greenways. Here a trail crew works at the state's Kepler Bradley Lakes "Black Bear" trail.**







Conceptual drawing of the proposed Morris Thompson Cultural and Visitor Center, Fairbanks.

## Morris Thompson

The Morris Thompson Cultural and Visitor Center has been under development in Fairbanks for the past four years. This new facility will house three organizations: the Fairbanks Alaska Public Lands Information Center; Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC), a regional Alaska Native organization; and the Fairbanks Convention and Visitors Bureau. The TCC and FCVB will form a non-profit corporation to own and operate the building; the Public Lands Information Center will be a tenant. The City of Fairbanks is also a partner and will own the land. Funding received a major boost in the 2005 federal budget, with more than \$6 million provided in statutory aid through the NPS, bringing the total federal commitment to more than \$14.5 million. Additional funding is being sought from the State of Alaska and the private sector.

## Regulations

The National Park Service in 2004 completed an important project with the State of Alaska as it published a comprehensive revision of Alaska national park regulations, the first time such a revision had been undertaken in 20 years. Generally, the regulations are similar to existing designations, closures, openings, and other provisions established by park superintendents. These had been annually compiled in park compendiums, but were more appropriate as formal regulations.

The changes added consistency to the meaning of terms and to the regulations in effect in each of the 16 units of the National Park System in Alaska. The regulations dealt with a variety of topics including camping limits, use of bear spray, campfires, airstrips and closures of facilities to protect public safety and for other reasons.

See the regulations link at [www.nps.gov/akso](http://www.nps.gov/akso)



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**A**laska's rich cultural history continued to receive considerable attention in 2004, both in parks and in programs working on nationally significant resources outside of park boundaries.

The Amalik Bay Archeological District, which includes 28 prehistoric sites clustered in an 8,300-acre wilderness area of islands, mainland, and coastal waters in Katmai National Park and Preserve, received a recommendation from the National Park Service's Landmark Committee to join the ranks of 48 other national historic landmarks in Alaska. The official designation awaits the signature of the Secretary of the Interior. The Amalik Bay district is nationally significant because it:

- Preserves evidence of almost 8,000 years of human occupation in south-west Alaska, and contains the Mink Island site, which is the oldest recorded site along the Katmai coastline;
- Conveys the story of the early peopling of Alaska, as well as the spread of Eskimo culture throughout the far northern tier of the North American continent;
- Provides an excellent representation of the prehistory of the Alutiiq people (Pacific Eskimo), who are a strong and vital force in Alaska's Native community today.



This antler arrowhead from the Hungry Fox archeological site was one of the many artifacts added to Gates of the Arctic's museum collections in 2004.

## Archeological Mentorship Program has Successful First Year

This past summer was the first one funded by a three-year Shared Beringian Heritage grant received by the Alaska Region's National Register Program for the purpose of involving youth from villages in Northwest Alaska, as well as one Russian university student, in archeological study and fieldwork. Noatak was the village selected to start off the program. The Park Service partnered with the Noatak IRA Council which provided office space for four high school students and their village supervisor.

The students spent most of their two-month stint of employment learning

about archeology back home in Noatak, but also had the rare opportunity to participate in fieldwork far from home. These students, along with their NPS archeological mentors, joined with a crew of professional NPS archeologists and students from Anaktuvuk Pass for a two-week project of testing the Tuktu-Naiyuk site near Anaktuvuk Pass.

Bob Gal, archeologist with Western Arctic National Parklands, orchestrated the logistics and testing at the site, first discovered in the early 1960s. Gal and Brown University doctoral candidate Julie Esdale supervised a crew of 22 in the methodical search for tools dating to 4,000 to 6,000 years old or older.



Bob Gal (kneeling left), archeologist with Western Arctic Parklands, taught students about archeology during their mentorship program.



During the summer of 2004, five students from the University of Oregon's School of Architecture spent 12 weeks recording six historic buildings on the Sheldon Jackson College campus in Sitka. The effort is a continuation of a Historic American Building Survey project started in 1996.

Sheldon Jackson, one of seven National Historic Landmarks in Sitka, received a 2004 Campus Heritage Grant from the Getty Grant Program to develop a preservation plan for the school and to record the buildings on the historic campus quadrangle. Eight students from the University of Oregon produced the plan during the spring term and then passed the torch to the summer interns. The architect interns spent three weeks measuring and photographing the buildings before electronically reproducing them through computer-aided drafting to within 1/8" accuracy. They recorded the nuances of each building, be it a decisive lean or a missing window. The drawings provide a snapshot in time, and will be instrumental in restoring the college's noteworthy buildings, which were designed in 1910. The college is the oldest continually operated educational institution in Alaska. To learn more about this program, visit: <http://www.cr.nps.gov/habshaer/>

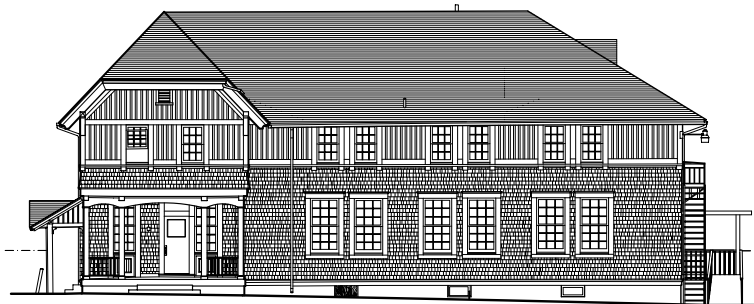
Sitka was the site of another historical event in 2004. October marked the 200th anniversary of a battle by the Kiks.adi people of Sitka to defend their homeland against Czarist Russians intent on expanding their lucrative Alaskan fur trade. Sitka National Historical Park was established in part to protect the site of the Battle of 1804 –



The 200th anniversary of the last major battle between the Tlingit and Russians was marked in Sitka in 2004.

one of the last major conflicts between the Tlingit and the Russians and a turning point in the region's history. In October, descendants of battle participants from both sides held a commemoration to pay homage to those who fell and to put a formal end to the remaining animosity and grief over lost lives and the Russian occupation. The formal ceremony was held under the K'alyaan totem pole, carved and raised in 1999 to pay tribute to the Kiks.adi leader K'alyaan who led his people in the battle.

The second day of the commemoration included participation by a direct descendant of Alexander Baranof, the first governor of Russian America. At the request of the Kiks.adi, the National Park Service, the Library of Congress, Russian historians and the Southeast Alaska Indian Cultural Center worked to locate and bring Irina Afrosina of Moscow to Sitka for the event.



During the summer of 2004, students from the University of Oregon produced a Preservation Plan for the historic buildings at Sheldon Jackson College.

## Falls Creek/Kahtaheena River Hydropower EIS

In 2004, NPS staff continued work on an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) prepared with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. The EIS evaluated the potential effects on the environment from licensing the proposed Falls Creek Hydroelectric Project and a land exchange in Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve. The final EIS was completed in June and on October 27 the commission issued a license to the Gustavus Electric Company.

As part of the congressional legislation associated with the project, lands within Glacier Bay National Park at the site of the hydroelectric project will go to the state of Alaska, while state lands within either Klondike Gold Rush or Wrangell-St. Elias National Parks will come to the federal government. The exchange is expected to be completed in 2005.

## Glacier Bay Cruise Ships

A Glacier Bay Science Advisory Board called for in the plans regarding vessel quotas and operating requirements was appointed in 2004. The board will provide the first review and summary of applicable research and literature before October 1 when park management conducts the annual review of cruise ship numbers to determine if an adjustment is indicated for the 2006 season.

## Access

With only four of 16 national park units on the road system in Alaska, and large amounts of privately-owned land within the boundaries of many of the parks, access to parks and access to private lands has long been a high priority. In 2004, a multi-disciplined team from the NPS consulted with officials from the state of Alaska and early this year released a draft user's guide to access in Alaska's national parks. The guide will be finalized later this year and is intended to help private

landowners understand the processes that may be necessary to have legal access to their lands within national parks. Certain types of access, such as using a snowmachine or flying a plane to a private airstrip, do not require any permission from the National Park Service. Access that requires construction on publicly owned land, though, generally requires permits with conditions that protect public resources such as salmon streams and wildlife.



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**T**he first major set of plans done by the National Park Service after the 1980 Alaska Lands Act was general management plans for each of the parks. Finished by the mid-1980s, each sought to predict the types of use that park areas would see, outline the types of facilities necessary for visitors and staff, and describe the land protection issues that faced each unit.

The management plan for Wrangell-St. Elias, for instance, predicted that, “During the next decade and beyond, it is expected that visitor use will increase significantly over existing levels from an estimated 22,200 visitors in 1984 to between 48,000 and 67,000 visitors or possibly more by 1995.” That projected visitor growth has come, although slightly later than predicted; in 2004, the park hosted about 57,000 visitors.

More detailed planning for the future of Alaska’s national parks, to both protect public resources and provide

opportunities for public use of parks, has continued almost uninterrupted since the basic plans were adopted.

Two significant plans — both from Denali National Park — are expected to be carefully scrutinized by the public this year, and both have generated significant public interest during their development.

The first is Denali’s Backcountry Management Plan. A revised draft will be distributed to the public early this year, with a final plan expected in the fall. It addresses the desired future conditions and outlines the growth opportunities for visitors and commercial visitor service providers in the non-developed backcountry of the park. Topics such as motorized use, aircraft access, commercial guiding, and other issues are addressed. In the same way in which the general management plans of 20 years ago had a similar format, the Denali plan will

serve as a model in how other Alaska parks will organize and approach their backcountry management.

An implementation plan for the facilities proposed on the South Side of the Alaska Range is the second major Denali planning effort. Public comment will be sought on the draft plan in fall 2005. Two construction alternatives — one with facilities east of the George Parks Highway near Curry Ridge, and the second on a spur off the Petersville Road — are being proposed. Both development areas provide stunning views of the Alaska Range, and seek to provide new recreational activities in or near the national park. With visitation along the main park road reaching capacity, the South Side developments are proposed in part to make other parts of Denali more accessible and orient visitors and residents to new recreational opportunities.

## Secretary Norton Dedicates Glacier Bay Maintenance Support Facility

Federal and state government officials including Department of the Interior Secretary Gale Norton, Hoonah Indian Association officials, and community members joined park staff in celebrating the new maintenance facility and other facility and road improvements in the park on April 27, 2004, in Bartlett Cove.

The \$3.9 million facility allows all the park maintenance operations to be

under one roof for the first time, out of inclement weather, and with safer working conditions for park employees. The 20,800 square foot facility is one of several infrastructure improve-

ments at Glacier Bay, and part of the Service's multi-year effort to improve maintenance and visitor facilities at national park units around the country.



Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton at Glacier Bay's ribbon cutting ceremony celebrating the construction of new facilities and other improvements.

## Building for the Future

In the 2005 budget, Congress provided significant funding for several Alaska park projects.

The most visible project will be a replacement for the aging Eielson Visitor Center in the heart of Denali. Located at Mile 66 of the park road, the old center will be torn down this year, and rebuilt over the next two years, with plans to re-open in the summer of 2007. The new 8,800 square foot center will be twice as large as the existing facility, but less intrusive on the landscape as it will be built into the hillside with ceiling level parking. New viewing area, exhibits,



an indoor eating area, and informal seating for interpretive programs are among the planned improvements. In addition, the building designers are focusing on using recycled materials and renewable energy sources.

The NPS also received direction on two other visitor center projects. Land acquisition is taking place for a new center in Seward to serve the increas-

ing number of visitors to Kenai Fjords. The multi-agency center will be close to the Alaska SeaLife Center, a key partner for the NPS in Seward.

Also, funding for the first phase of a new visitor center in Kotzebue was appropriated. Construction is expected to begin this year, and continue for two years.



# Fiscal Year 2004 Expense Report, Alaska Region

## Construction

Morris Thompson Visitor Center	\$5,157,800
Denali Front Country	\$134,625
Glacier Bay Maintenance Facility	\$2,345
Kenai Fjords Coop Visitor Center	\$44,256
Western Arctic Heritage Center	\$768,001
Wrangell-St. Elias Kennecott Mine Stabilization	\$27,468
Wrangell-St Elias Visitor Center	\$249,459
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$6,383,954</b>

## Land Acquisition

**\$2,162,546**

## Operations

Personal Services (salaries, benefits, etc.)	\$48,757,050
Travel (within parks and Lower 48)	\$2,185,507
Transportation (supplies and equipment)	\$1,468,523
Rent, Communications, Utilities	\$3,775,096
Printing and Copying	\$112,189
Services (aircraft rental, architecture & design, contracts)	\$14,100,720
Supplies and Materials	\$4,955,087
Equipment (computers, vehicles, etc.)	\$2,467,944
Land and Structures	\$182,450
Other	\$5,413,119
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$83,417,685</b>

**Total \$91,964,185**



The abandoned Orthodox church in the *Lost Village of Biorka* in 1945.  
Ethel Ross Oliver Collection, Accession Number 1985-0012-00052, University  
of Alaska, Fairbanks.

The Lost Villages of the Aleutians research project focuses on the Aleutian (Unangan) villages that were never repopulated as a result of World War II. Funded primarily by cultural project money from the National Park Service, this documentation will highlight each village with archival photographs, maps, oral histories, genealogy, and ethnographic and historical architectural descriptions for Attu, Chernofski, Kashega, Makushin, and Biorka.

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